

Mohave County Miner.

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With a String to It.

It was a southern statesman who once upon a time became so overcome by the divine afflatus, or some other afflatus of ancient vintage, that he stopped in the middle of a speech upon the floor of congress, and said: "Mister Speaker, where am I at?" He excited a great deal of comment at the time, as a man in doubt as to what he was doing; but, alas, there are others. The present secretary of the interior department, Mr. Bliss, seems to be delightfully unconscious as to where he should begin and leave off in the matter of decisions affecting the mineral interests of the west. His decisions being the interpretation of law have all the force and effect of law. Practically Mr. Bliss is a judicial body, sitting in judgment over the subordinate twigs on his branch of the government. While some of the decisions emanating from Mr. Bliss are very wholesome, and doubtless all are made in good faith, occasionally it seems to us he virtually annuls the operation of law.

Congress passed a law providing for the appointment of mineral land commissioners to classify the lands within the railway grants and determine their character. After all the expense incident to the work of such commissioners, it would appear from a recent holding by the department that they are acting merely in an advisory capacity. In other words, they go about the country guessing what the land is, leaving it to be determined by those who contest for its title the actual determination of its character. The secretary says:

"By the sixth section of the act, the classification when no protest is filed against the same, and when approved by the secretary of the interior, becomes final, and a tract returned as mineral, which return becomes final, is forever excepted from the grant. But it does not prevent other disposition of the land when returned as mineral should upon subsequent investigation prove the tract to be non-mineral in character and an entryman making entry of such land under the mineral laws should establish the mineral character the same as though such classification had not been made."

If this ruling is supplemented by another, which may come in due time, to the effect that lands set apart as mineral by the commissioners, and subsequently claimed as agricultural, will be definitely entered upon the government records as such unless their mineral character is determined within a certain time from the filing of the agricultural claim, the work of the commissioners will be destroyed and the law under which they operate become a farce. The law was passed for the expressed purpose of preventing mineral lands from being classed as agricultural, to the end that patents might not be secured to lands within the railway grants that were exempt under the conditions of the grant. But the ruling of the secretary says that lands returned as mineral by the commissioners can at any time "upon subsequent investigation" be entered as agricultural and their mineral character must be established "the same as though such classification had not been made." Under this ruling any of the classified mineral lands within the grant can be entered as agricultural and go to patent if their mineral character is not determined, which determination can only be made by prospecting and finding ore-bearing veins. In other words, our classified mineral finds are exempt from the grant only when actually proven to be mineral in each and every division through the discovery of minerals thereon, and are subject to agricultural competition at any time prior to the securing of a patent. Of what use, then, is the classification made by the commissioners? Of what benefit is the law providing for this classification? Why not permit each man to determine for himself the character of the land upon which he is prospecting, subject to the action of the courts?

The ruling of the secretary opens the door to endless litigation, for the man who prospects upon lands classified as mineral by the commissioners has no protection from the man who thinks he can utilize the top-soil for turnips, until the actual discovery of ore. Under this

ruling large tracts of mineral lands will doubtless be entered as agricultural and patented as such in default of actual proof as to their mineral character. In this way the aims and objects of the law creating the mineral land commissioners becomes practically a dead letter. Once patented as agricultural land the prospector is barred from securing it as mineral no matter how much ore he may discover thereon. The owner of such "agricultural" tracts will look after their mineral wealth in due time. Secretary Bliss is demonstrating the necessity for a cabinet department to look after the mining industry, with a secretary who will familiarize himself with the duties of his office and have the nerve and manhood to properly discharge them.—Western Mining World.

Arizona's Mining Industry.

Mining, while it has been the chief factor in Arizona's prosperity, has received little if any, aid from other sources. The prospector has been the avant courier of civilization in the west, and all other industries have followed in the wake of mining and fattened upon it. Railroads are mere adjuncts to those resources of the country through which they are built, and aside from mining there has been little to warrant their construction in Arizona. Furthermore, there is not an agricultural community in the territory that could survive without the support of the mining districts, which are their chief markets; and looking more closely into Arizona's industrial life we find that merchandizing and the trades, and even the professions, wait upon the prosperity of the mining industry. When we consider these facts we can better understand how it was that Arizona escaped the financial and industrial paralysis which for the past several years affected so disastrously almost every portion of the Union. It is not alone profitable to indulge in retrospection for the satisfaction which comes from recounting the progress made in past years in the mining industry in Arizona. The record if carefully studied will be found to contain also much that is instructive, will reveal the causes of failure and show how they may be avoided in the future, and indicate through what channels, or by what agencies, greater progress may be achieved.

Arizona is practically an unexplored field for mining operations, and its great wealth of minerals and the possibility of their profitable conversion is realized by few even of those who are engaged in mining in the territory today. It is the last great division of the United States, possessing important mineral resources that remains undeveloped, and capital is beginning to appreciate the fact that it offers the most promising field for investment. During the past two years there was more inquiry for mines in Arizona than in any five years previous, and the investors were largely seasoned mining men, and companies possessing ample capital, operating in other sections of the West, and who invested in Arizona after careful investigation of her mineral resources, convinced that this territory would ere many years be the scene of great activity and prosperity in this especial field.

The expansion of mining in Arizona must of necessity be gradual, for the reason chiefly that the territory is deficient in railroads, and especially in competitive lines, which alone will insure reasonable freight rates and cost of supplies, which in many districts, and for all but the highest grades of ores, are now prohibitive. The investment of millions of dollars annually in new enterprises, and the discovery and development of great mines will stimulate railroad construction, which will insure Arizona's growth and prosperity.—Silver Belt.

A man named Victor Bob, who writes from Cripple Creek, says he has been in the milling business for twenty years, declares that no new processes for treating ores are needed. That a proper combination of existing processes is all that is needed. In making this statement he gives his whole case away. It is admitted by all well informed metallurgists that there is and has been nothing new in the treatment of ores at any time ex-

cept in the attempt to create devices to demonstrate more economically principles dating back to the foundation of the world. The discovery of these principles has been gradual and partial, extending over a period of more than a century. It is in the economical application of fundamental principles that the difference between so-called new processes exists. There is absolutely no limiting the efforts of the intelligent scientific investigator. The man who has had a glimpse into occult laws can never be satisfied with superficial or partial triumphs in their application. Edison and his young son, Tesla and a host of others demonstrate this thirst for achievement along the line of what is usually considered impossible. When, therefore, a man calmly announces at this crude stage of development that the science of metallurgy is complete and no more progress along these lines is desirable he simply declares himself a mopeback and a man too narrow to do anything more than follow in the beaten track made by the hundreds of partial investigators who have preceded him. Truly the millenium must be near when the announcement is made that man has attained perfection in any given line of research. Next thing Mr. Bob will be wanting experiments stopped along electrical lines and advocating the incarceration of Edison and his gang of confederates, who are all the time trying to disturb the peace and quiet of this sleepy generation by their perpetual new discoveries.—Record.

No more important item of news has been published recently than the announcement by the New York Herald, from its correspondent at Managua, that the United States Nicaragua canal commission had cabled to Washington the unanimous opinion that the canal is practicable and can be built for less than three quarters of the original estimate. They calculate that from four and a half to six and a half years will be required to build it. The Maritime Canal company, anticipating a favorable report from the commission as to the feasibility of the project, and of subsequent favorable action by congress, is reported to have men on the ground prepared to begin the work of construction immediately. There is always more or less guess work in estimating the cost and time required for the construction of such a vast enterprise, and it may be that the report is over sanguine, but it is nevertheless encouraging to the early commencement of work on this great waterway which has been the dream of engineers and of nations for almost a century. The importance of a canal across the isthmus, built under American auspices, can scarcely be overestimated for the development of United States commerce, and especially for the protection of our vast interests on the Pacific coast.—Silver Belt.

A Decision Affecting Life Insurance.

The United States Supreme Court has decided that the heirs of a person who commits suicide when sound in mind, cannot collect on the insurance policy on his life. Just previous to his death William W. Runk of Philadelphia increased the insurance on his life by 200,000\$, making an aggregate insurance of 500,000\$. He wrote a letter the day before his death, saying he intended to kill himself, so that his life insurance money could be devoted to the payment of his debts. In deciding the suit brought to recover a part of the money Justice Harlan said that when an insurance company entered into a contract to insure a man's life neither party to the contract could be supposed to have suicide in contemplation, and it was not intended in entering into such a contract that the life of the person insured should be at the option of either of the parties.

No Gold Legislation.

It is useless to attempt to minimize the significance of the vote taken in the senate yesterday on the Teller resolution. It means that the upper house of congress, as at present constituted, will not enact financial legislation on the lines of the Republican platform and in accordance with the well-known wish of President McKinley.—San Diego Union.

Ex-Marshall McCann, who lately resigned his position as head of the police department of the city of Helena, was in Butte Monday. He recently returned from Juneau and talks interestingly of the north. He took his family with him to that Alaska town, but unable to find quarters in that overcrowded burg where he could go to housekeeping, was compelled to return to Helena. During the week he spent in Juneau the sun did not shine, rain or snow falling every day. A drarrier place would be hard to imagine. Mr. McCann is emphatic in the statement that that country is no place for women and children. Skaguay is worse than Juneau. The water that supplies the shallow wells in that town seeps down from the trail that is covered with dead horses. The death rate is fearful and promises to become worse as warm weather comes. He believes the stories of wealth are vastly exaggerated in the interests of the transportation companies, although some prospectors have scored great successes and return rich. He contemplates returning to Alaska without his family, prepared to endure the hardships of that incomparably tough climate, on the theory that he does not wish to abandon an enterprise once undertaken. Few men are better equipped mentally and physically for an intelligent search for the golden fleece than Mr. McCann. His sterling integrity of character, great energy and good judgment will insure him success if it lies within the possibilities of life.

In referring to Butte the Salt Lake Tribune says: Butte, "the greatest mining camp on earth," has never known a day in all its history when its output of mineral wealth was greater or when more men found lucrative employment in its mines and smelters. A building boom has overtaken Montana's metropolis, and it has grown materially and permanently. Butte mine owners have been, to mix the metaphor a trifle, "making hay while the sun shines." "The price of copper is comparatively high," said a mine owner the other day, "and while the demand for it is increasing, we live in an age when one of two things may happen within a few years, either a substitute for copper in electrical machinery or a method of getting along without it may be discovered that will glut the markets of the world. Mind you, I don't say that will happen, but there is just enough possibility of either to make the mining men feel like getting their assets into the market as fast as possible." The next few years will see the output of copper increase rapidly. There will be no pause in the operations of that nature in years to come.

There is a large moiety of truth in the following from our Yuma exchange: "The Sun is pained to notice the antipathy manifested by a few of our contemporaries toward questions of vital importance to the public, especially when these questions do not emanate from their school of politics. We are sufficiently hampered by mopebackism, and if a portion of the press persist in perpetuating sordid motives which are a check to progress, Arizona will not move onward and upward as our more liberal minded men would have it. The press of Arizona has a great mission to perform, but when it fails to advocate measures for the public weal and stabs indiscriminately at everything that bobs up, it were better that it never existed."

A bride of a year was recently heard to say that ten of her acquaintances were to be married before Christmas, and that as the parents of all of them had sent her

expensive wedding gifts, she and her husband were in much perturbation about the customary return. There is food for reflection in her comment that as they lived in a small rented house and kept but one servant, their valuable silver was still stored in the vault where it had been placed at their marriage; that although the gifts represented over 3,000\$, the young husband had to struggle for their livelihood; and that the most modest presents they could select for their ten friends would take his whole month's salary.

Young men, there is one thing you cannot do. You cannot make a success of life unless you work. Older men than you have tried it and failed, says an exchange. You cannot loaf around the street corner, smoke, tell stories, and sponge on some one else without making a failure in life. You must learn a trade or get into some honest business. If you don't you will become a chronic loafer and there is no place in the world for loafers. The ripe fruit is at the top of the tree and you must climb if you get it, or some smart man will pluck it from you. Do something, no matter how small or how low the wages, it will be a starter. Help yourself and others will help you. There is no royal road to success; will, grit and endurance are the qualities which lead to it.

Representative Richardson, of Tenn., stirred up the republican menagerie in the House by repeating the minstrel end man's joke about the only two things he ever saw that were exactly alike—the Cleveland panic and the McKinley boom; and when the republicans started in to talk "prosperity," they were asked why that "prosperity" had brought on a strike of 125,000 cotton mill operatives in New England, and made quite a mess of their attempts to explain that unusual accompaniment of "prosperity." Grosvenor, of Ohio, got himself so tied up that he sought to escape by a bit of personal blackguardism—calling Greene, of Nebraska, a back-woodman.

Prof. Gates, of the Smithsonian institute, at Washington, after years of scientific investigation, declares that science will put an end to all crime. This is the calm judgment of the deeply learned man who has devoted his life to research. He announces, not as a possibility, but as a fact, that the murder in a man's brain can be removed by the surgeon's knife. If the diseased part can be definitely placed it can be either cut out altogether or treated so as to become healthy, when the victim becomes a normal man.—Sentinel.

Rich as are the gold mines of the Rand district in South Africa, it is stated by a correspondent that it is costing about as much to get out the metal as it is worth, and 100 mines must close down very soon, as they can not be operated at a profit. There were 183 mines in operation last year in the district, and several of these have since been closed. The big paying properties number little more than a dozen.

The politest man on earth has been found, a gentleman of Louisville, Ky., who, meditating suicide, went around personally and invited his friends to attend his funeral. They accepted, not believing him to be in earnest, but when a Kentucky gentleman passes his word you don't need any writing, and the prospective corpse went home and made an end of himself. His funeral was a success.

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